

The Conviction of Demond Doss

Pastor Joseph Clark – June 12, 2020

“One more, Lord. Help me get one more.”

- Desmond T. Doss

¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

- Matthew 5:16

Born in 1919 in Lynchburg, Virginia, his father a carpenter, he was raised from his childhood as a devout Seventh Day Adventist and his family instilled Sabbath worship, a devotion to The Word, and a life led by Christ. He took a job at a shipyard to help support his family during The Great Depression. When the World War II conscription took place, he volunteered for service, despite the fact that he qualified for a deferment on account of his work at the shipyard. He enlisted, informing the Army that he was a conscientious objector, and he volunteered to serve as a medic. Instead, the Army sent him to bootcamp as part of a rifle company. The skinny Virginian refused to carry a rifle or to kill. He made it clear that he wanted to save lives, not take them. His superior officers and non-commission officers tried everything to make life so difficult that Doss would quit. They even attempted to court martial him, but he refused to quit. His fellow troops bullied him and cursed him. They saw him as a coward, and a wimp. Doss was raised with a fervent faith, and his fellow soldiers saw his puritanical Bible reading and constant praying as a threat to their safety, so they ostracized him.

He served as a medic for his rifle company in the Japanese-held Pacific Islands. He never held a grudge. Anytime that a wounded soldier called out “medic!” Doss would place himself in harm’s way amid enemy gunfire and explosions as he saved and treated his fellow soldiers. He even treated fallen enemy troops. One escarpment was called Hacksaw Ridge, which the Americans fought for inch by bloody inch. On May 5, 1945, his superior officers called a retreat, as they were overrun by the enemy. Wounded American survivors were left scattered across the

battlefield as the company retreated and climbed back down the cliff. Doss remained behind against orders. He spent the entire day and night dragging the wounded to the cliff to safety, treated them and lowered them down. His courage and faith in God resulted in Doss saving 75 of his wounded comrades including some of his superiors who had attempted to have him court martialed. Every time he retrieved a man and dragged him to safety, he would pray "One more, Lord, help me get one more." He did not carry or shoot a rifle once. His only weapons were his Bible and his faith in God. Eventually, the Americans took Hacksaw Ridge. However, his company would not go back without Doss praying for them and accompanying them for the battle. Doss was eventually brutally wounded by grenade shrapnel, and yet he refused to be taken by the medics until, yet another wounded man was taken before him.

President Harry S Truman awarded him the Congressional Medal of Honor, the first conscientious objector to win the medal. Truman held Doss's hand throughout the entire citation. "I'm proud of you," Truman said. "You really deserve this. I consider this a greater honor than being president."

He was awarded several other medals including the Purple Heart, two Bronze Stars, and the Good Conduct Medal. As a result of his war injuries, he would lose a lung and five ribs. He lived to the age of 87. He married twice, as his first wife of 49 years died in a car accident in 1991. He had a son, Desmond Tommy Doss Jr.

Veteran Carl Bentley, who was also at Hacksaw Ridge, said, "It's as if God had His hand on Doss's shoulder. It's the only explanation I can give."

Doss's conviction and devotion to God shone brightly as an unarmed medic who saved lives instead of taking them.

The Holy Spirit tells us in The Word:

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

"I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love ..." (Ephesians 3:16-17)

“Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

“Through Him you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so your faith and hope are in God.” (1 Peter 1:21)

"For we live by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
(2 Timothy 4:7)

“Therefore, my brothers and sisters, stay true to the Lord....” (Philippians 4:1)

Doss's strength of conviction went beyond what was convenient, easy, popular, accepted, and appreciated. However, by remaining steadfast in his faith and loyalty to God, and by not compromising on his devotion and respect for God's Word, he eventually won over the admiration and respect of those who once bullied and harassed him. He did not justify making an exception to his faith. He remained solid. He walked it out strictly and accepted the persecution and judgement that came with being a saved member of God's kingdom. How many Christians today make excuses for their sins? How many Christians read The Word, attend service and small groups, read devotionals, and when the time comes to demonstrate strength of conviction, they fold and give in to temptation? Then the next day, they say that they hate themselves, that they are ashamed of themselves, and claim to repent, only to do it all over again a few days later. Does God know our struggles? Absolutely! Does He expect of us obedience, self restraint, self discipline? And sacrifice? Absolutely!

“The mighty victory is staying true to God. It is maintaining a mature perspective—where God means everything to you.”

– www.ransomedheart.com

“We can stay true to God when we keep our focus on Jesus and remember that this world is not our home. One day, Jesus is coming back and will bring everything under His control.”

– www.kerryshhook.org

“When faced with a decision, remember to ask yourself, “Is this the Lord’s way or the world’s way?”

– www.inspiration.org

What should we do when others attack our belief in God? When others attack our belief in God, we should continue to do what is right. When others attack our belief in God, we should continue to look to God for strength and answers. When others attack our belief in God, we should praise God for what He has done for us.

- www.preachology.com

Abraham had such conviction for God that he was willing to sacrifice his only son. Our Glorious Father in Heaven had such a conviction for His love for us that he sent His only son, God in the flesh, to be the sacrificial “Lamb of God” to die on the Cross and take away the sins of the world. How many of us would have such firm conviction that we would sacrifice one of our children and sacrifice ourselves? Doss put his life on the line for his fellow man, all the while remaining true to God.

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